SCOUT COMICS
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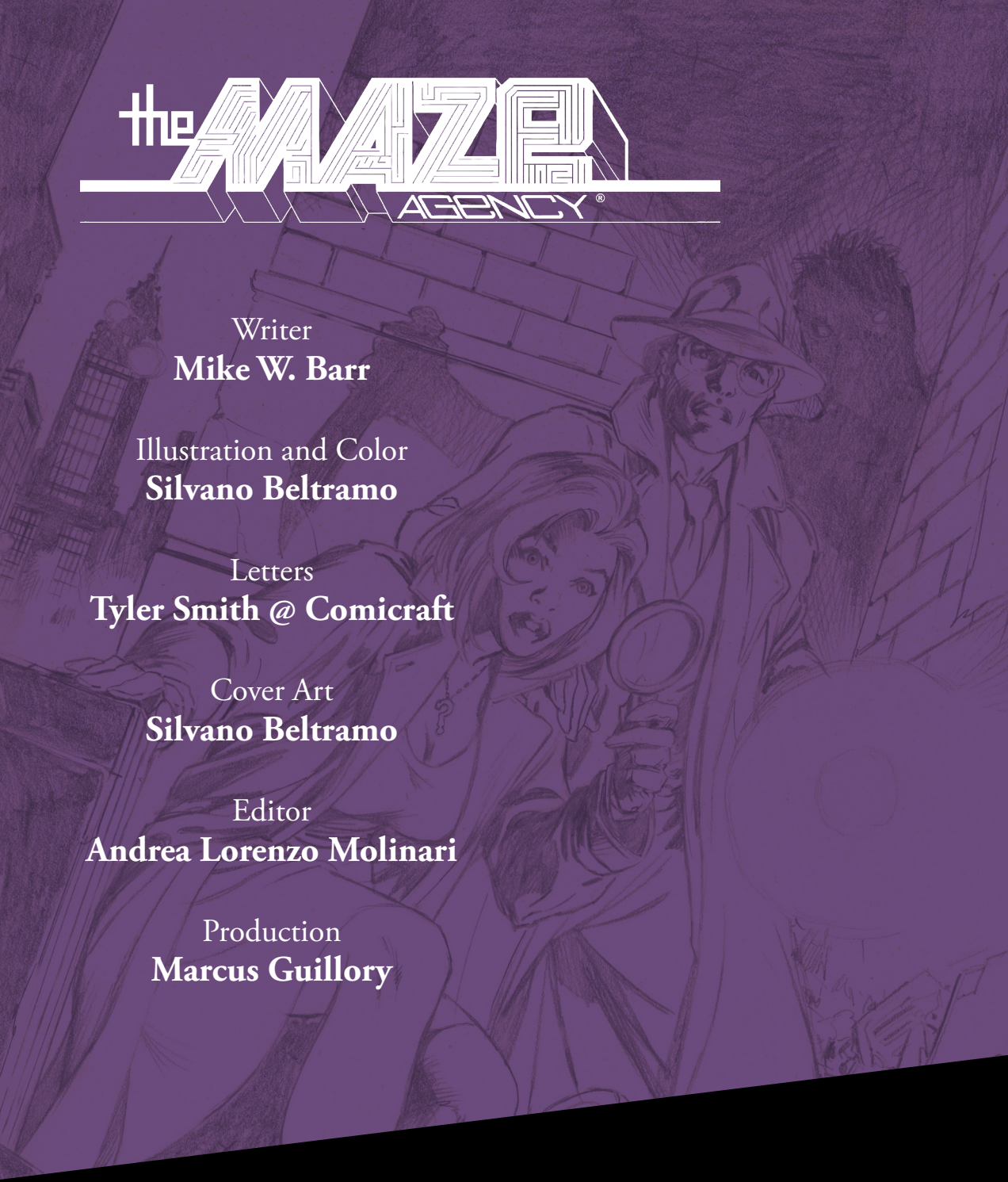
MIKE W. BARR
SILVANO BELTRAMO
the MAZE AGENCY®



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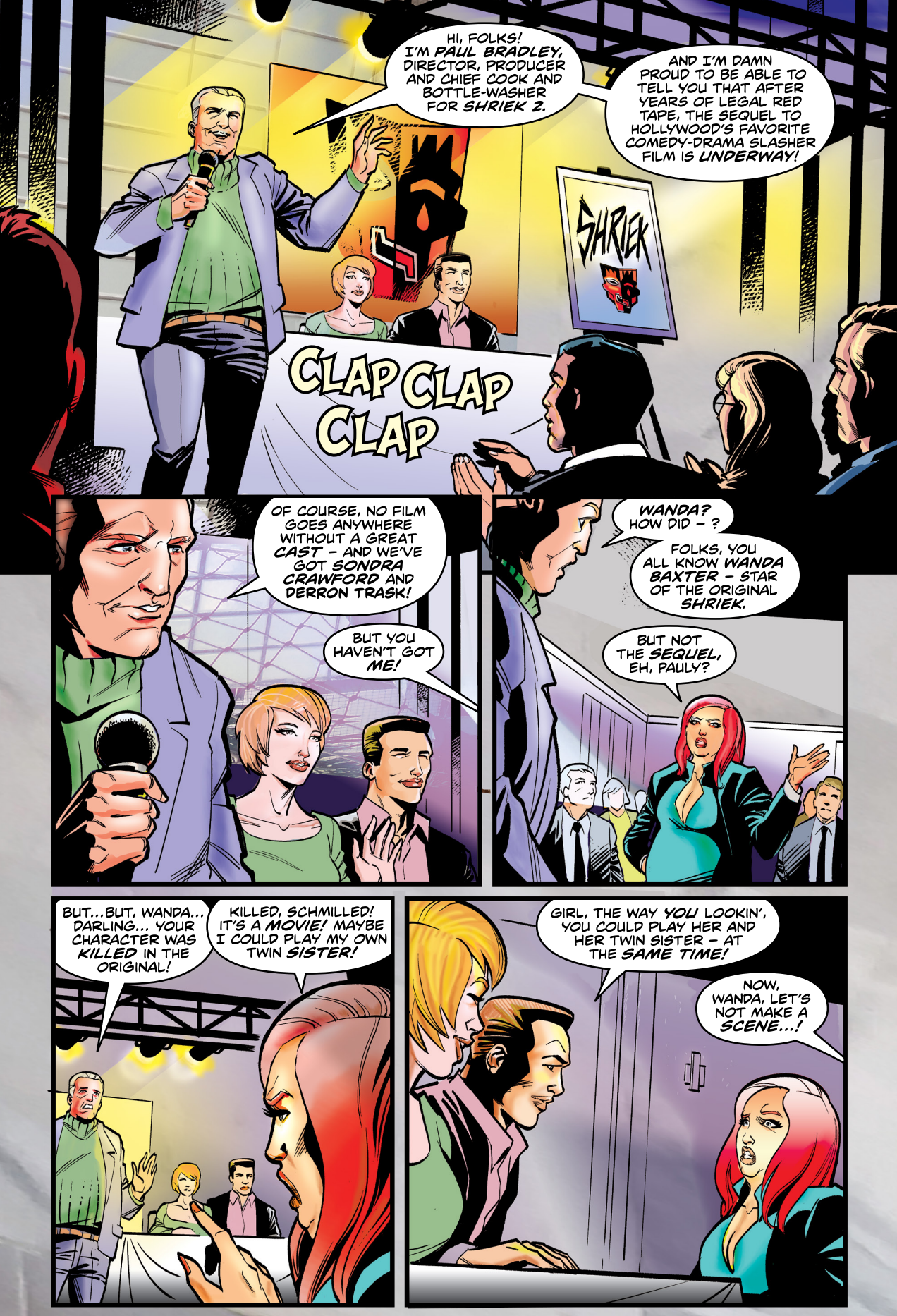
Presenting the return of comicdom's favorite detective duo...
the MAZE AGENCY
JENNIFER MAYS, "DETECTIVUS PRIVATUS"
GABRIEL WEBB, "SLEUTHUS AMATEURUS"
A killer is turning the sequel to a horror film classic into a real-life tragedy! Can The Maze Agency put a stop to the real-life murders of...
SHRIEK
THE SEQUEL!

...AND WE'RE HERE TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LONG-AWAITED SEQUEL...
T E L
...TO THE HORROR CLASSIC "SHRIEK!" MANY FACTORS, LEGAL AND OTHERWISE HAVE KEPT THIS PROJECT FROM GETTING STARTED FOR YEARS, BUT NOW...
EXCUSE ME...
...PARDON ME...
...SORRY...
HI, MARCY – MISS MAYS PUT ME ON THE LIST, RIGHT?
SURE THING, MR. WEBB. GO RIGHT IN – AFTER YOU PUT YOUR STUFF THROUGH THE METAL DETECTOR.
BEEP
OOOP
SURE, HAPPY TO COOPERATE WITH THE FORCES OF THE – OH, SORRY, LADY!
NO WORRIES, FELLA, JUST WATER UNDER THE –
HEY, YOU'RE SONDRA CRAWFORD – THE STAR OF THIS THING! YOU WERE GREAT IN "TOMORROW'S SORROW."
WELL, AREN'T YOU SWEET...

I THINK I'VE GOT YOUR STUFF, MISS CRAWFORD...
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, LOVER. HERE YOU ARE...
I'M DUE UP FRONT. SEE YOU AROUND.
OH, I'LL BE AROUND!
TRYING TO BEAT MY TIME, ACE?
OH, HI, BABE! YOU KNOW, THAT'S SONDRA CRAWFORD. I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LITTLE CRUSH ON HER...
DO I NEED TO BE JEALOUS...?
SMOOCH
NO, NO...WE'RE GOOD.
I THOUGHT SO. I ALSO THOUGHT YOU MIGHT GET ONE OF YOUR ARTICLES OUT OF THIS LITTLE SOIRÉE. ENJOY.
OH, I WILL, I –
HEY, ARE THOSE CHICKEN WINGS?


HI, FOLKS! I'M PAUL BRADLEY, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER AND CHIEF COOK AND BOTTLE-WASHER FOR SHRIEK 2.
AND I'M DAMN PROUD TO BE ABLE TO TELL YOU THAT AFTER YEARS OF LEGAL RED TAPE, THE SEQUEL TO HOLLYWOOD'S FAVORITE COMEDY-DRAMA SLASHER FILM IS UNDERWAY!
SHRIEK
CLAP CLAP CLAP
OF COURSE, NO FILM GOES ANYWHERE WITHOUT A GREAT CAST – AND WE'VE GOT SONDRA CRAWFORD AND DERRON TRASK!
BUT YOU HAVEN'T GOT ME!
WANDA? HOW DID – ?
FOLKS, YOU ALL KNOW WANDA BAXTER – STAR OF THE ORIGINAL SHRIEK.
BUT NOT THE SEQUEL, EH, PAULY?
BUT...BUT, WANDA... DARLING... YOUR CHARACTER WAS KILLED IN THE ORIGINAL!
KILLED, SCHMILLED! IT'S A MOVIE! MAYBE I COULD PLAY MY OWN TWIN SISTER!
GIRL, THE WAY YOU LOOKIN', YOU COULD PLAY HER AND HER TWIN SISTER – AT THE SAME TIME!
NOW, WANDA, LET'S NOT MAKE A SCENE...!

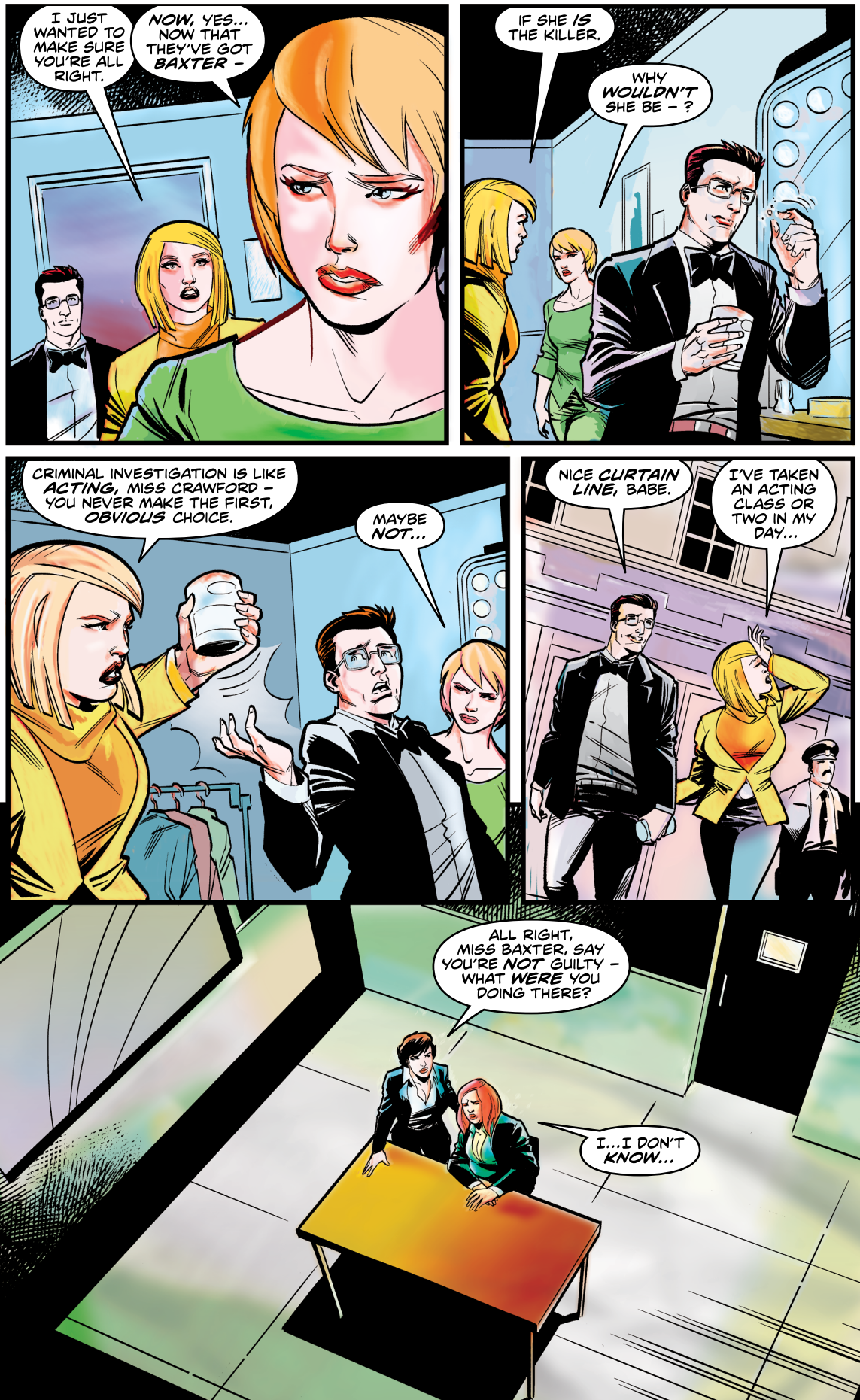
JUST WAIT, ALL OF YOU! I HOPE THIS THING BOMBS LIKE ISHTAR!
"SHRIEK"? WITH YOU IN IT, PIGGLY-WIGGLY, WE COULD CALL IT "SQUEAL"!
HOW DID SHE EVEN GET IN HERE, MISS MAYS? GET RID OF HER!
I'M ON IT, MR. BRADLEY!
HEY, HOW'D YOU GUYS GET DOWN HERE SO FAST...?
THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT, PAL...
...BUT WE'RE JUST THE STAND-INS FOR THE STARS! I'M JIMMY ADLER.
I'M MARTA LEWIS. NICE TO KNOW WE'RE DOING OUR JOBS.
I'M GABE WEBB. CARE FOR A CHICKEN WING?
NO, THANKS.
AM I GOING TO HAVE YOU UNDERFOOT WHEN FILMING STARTS, ACE?
ARE YOU KIDDING? IF WHAT GOES ON BEHIND THE CAMERAS IS AS INTERESTING AS WHAT'S IN FRONT...
"...YOU COULDN'T PAY ME TO STAY AWAY!"

ALL RIGHT, DERRON, WAIT AROUND THE CORNER THERE, THEN COME CREEPING AROUND WHEN I CALL "ACTION," LIKE WE REHEARSED, RIGHT?
LIKE I REHEARSED, RIGHT!
HEY, AIN'T YOU S'POSED T'BE – ?
HRRRK–!
ANNNND... ACTION!
THAT'S "ACTION," DERRON! DON'T PLAY THE PRIMA DONNA NOW – !
LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
BRING THE LIGHTS UP – AND CALL A DOCTOR – !

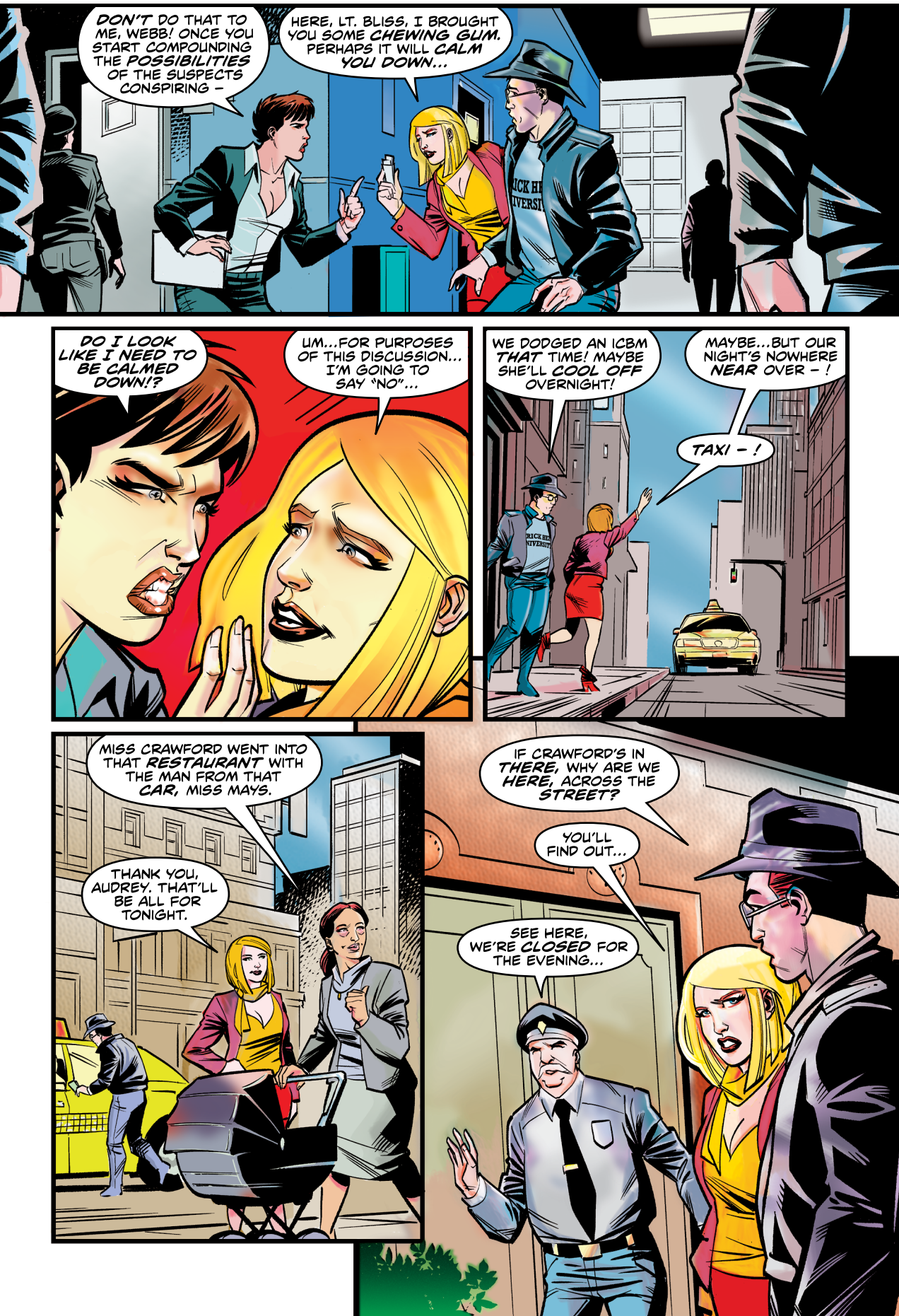
ALL AGENTS, THIS IS MAYS!
COVER ALL BUILDING ENTRANCES – !
– DON'T LET ANYONE OUT!
HEY, WHAT – ?
OW! WHAT'S THE HURRY, FELLA...?
LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT –
NO! NO – !
WANDA BAXTER! YOU OWE ME A HOT DOG, LADY!
YOU IDIOT – !
THAT WAS GOOD WORK, WEBB...! TRASK'S THROAT WAS SLASHED BY HIS KILLER...
CORONE

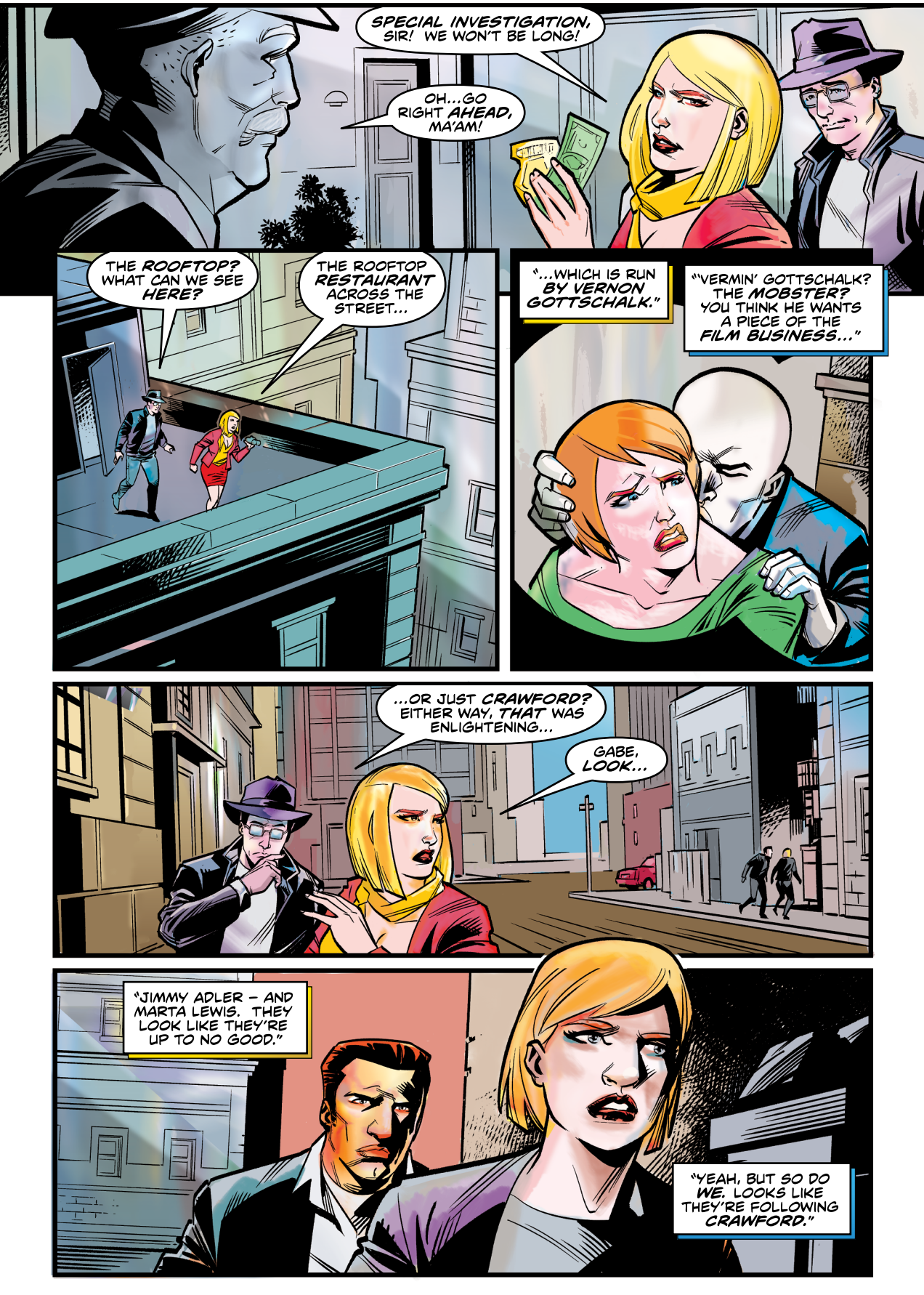
...AND BAXTER HAS JUST MADE HERSELF THE PRIME SUSPECT.
I TACKLED A KILLER – ?
ANY SIGN OF A WEAPON, LIEUTENANT BLISS?
NONE. WE SEARCHED EVERYONE. AND I'VE GOT A CREW GOING OVER THE ENTIRE BUILDING.
NO WEAPON...?
NO KNIFE...
...BUT WE FOUND THIS, LIEUTENANT, TUCKED IN A CORNER! WE'LL TURN IT OVER TO THE LAB BOYS, BUT IT LOOKS PRETTY BARE!
I THOUGHT THAT WAS YOU. HOW ARE YOU, SERGEANT SIMONS?
LONG TIME NO SEE, PROFESSOR – ANY BRAINSTORMS, YET?
SO FAR, I'M FRESH OUT. BUT REMEMBER WHAT CAPTAIN KIRK SAID: "GENIUS DOESN'T WORK ON AN ASSEMBLY LINE BASIS. YOU CAN'T SIMPLY SAY, 'TODAY I WILL BE BRILLIANT.'"
I THINK THE DIRECTOR IS MAKIN' AN ANNOUNCEMENT INSIDE, LOOT. MIGHT BE SOMETHING WE WANNA CATCH...

EVERYONE, AN ANNOUNCEMENT, PLEASE. SHRIEK – THE SEQUEL WILL CONTINUE! IT WILL BE DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF DERRON TRASK...
...AND WILL BE STARRING OUR BRILLIANT DISCOVERY, JIMMY ADLER! I KNOW YOU'LL DO US PROUD, JIMMY!
WHAT – ?
IT SEEMS CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER, MR. ADLER.
I DIDN'T WANT IT – NOT THIS WAY!
JUST TAKE THE WORK, JIMMY – HOWEVER YOU CAN GET IT.
KNOK KNOK
WHO IS IT?
SECURITY, MISS CRAWFORD...
OH, IT'S YOU. ALL RIGHT...
MAY WE COME IN?


I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
NOW, YES... NOW THAT THEY'VE GOT BAXTER –
IF SHE IS THE KILLER.
WHY WOULDN'T SHE BE – ?
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IS LIKE ACTING, MISS CRAWFORD – YOU NEVER MAKE THE FIRST, OBVIOUS CHOICE.
MAYBE NOT...
NICE CURTAIN LINE, BABE.
I'VE TAKEN AN ACTING CLASS OR TWO IN MY DAY...
ALL RIGHT, MISS BAXTER, SAY YOU'RE NOT GUILTY – WHAT WERE YOU DOING THERE?
I...I DON'T KNOW...

...I JUST KNOW I COULDN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF THIS THING I'D CREATED...
...GOING ON WITHOUT ME...
ARE YOU HOLDING HER, LIEUTENANT?
BETTER TO KEEP A TAIL ON HER AND SEE!
GOT SOME REPORTS, LOOT – SOME OF TRASK'S BLOOD ON THE ROBE, WIPED FROM A BLADE –
– BUT NO KNIFE FOUND? DESPITE HAVING EVERYONE SEARCHED? WHAT'D THE KILLER DO WITH IT?
BEATS ME. WE SEARCHED THE DAMN BUILDING, TOO – NO ONE FOUND A BLADE!
"THIS," AS THE KING OF SIAM WOULD SAY, "IS A PUZZLEMENT..."
AT LEAST WE'VE ELIMINATED BRADLEY AS A SUSPECT! HE COULDN'T HAVE KILLED TRASK IF HE WAS DOWN THE HALL FROM HIM!
UNLESS HE'S CONSPIRING WITH ONE OF THE OTHER SUSPECTS...!

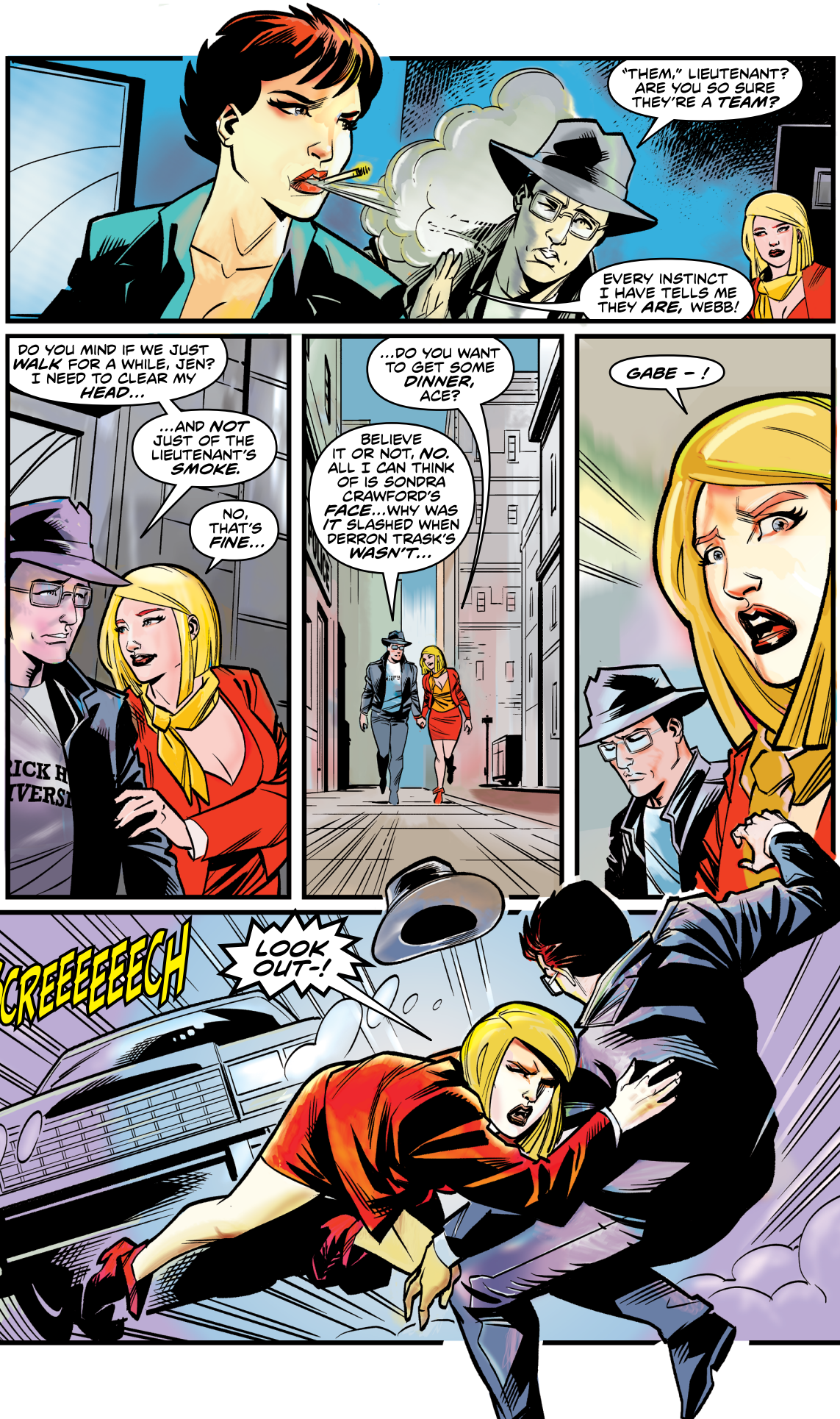

DON'T DO THAT TO ME, WEBB! ONCE YOU START COMPOUNDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE SUSPECTS CONSPIRING –
HERE, LT. BLISS, I BROUGHT YOU SOME CHEWING GUM. PERHAPS IT WILL CALM YOU DOWN...
DO I LOOK LIKE I NEED TO BE CALMED DOWN!?
UM...FOR PURPOSES OF THIS DISCUSSION... I'M GOING TO SAY "NO"...
WE DODGED AN ICBM THAT TIME! MAYBE SHE'LL COOL OFF OVERNIGHT!
MAYBE...BUT OUR NIGHT'S NOWHERE NEAR OVER – !
TAXI – !
MISS CRAWFORD WENT INTO THAT RESTAURANT WITH THE MAN FROM THAT CAR, MISS MAYS.
THANK YOU, AUDREY. THAT'LL BE ALL FOR TONIGHT.
IF CRAWFORD'S IN THERE, WHY ARE WE HERE, ACROSS THE STREET?
YOU'LL FIND OUT...
SEE HERE, WE'RE CLOSED FOR THE EVENING...

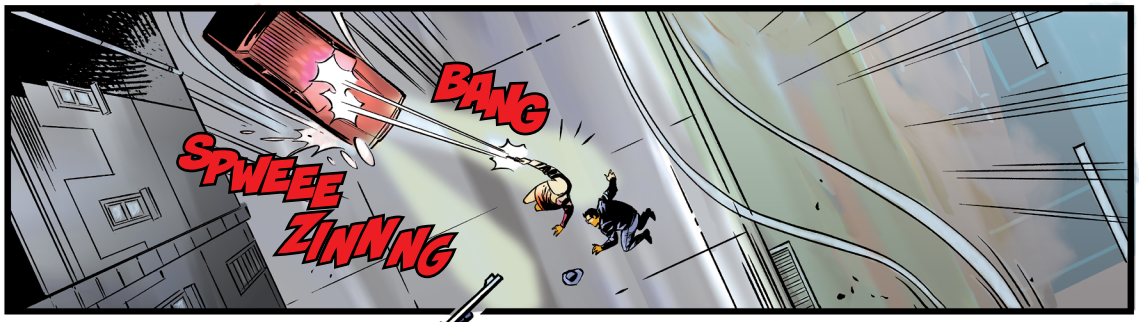

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION, SIR! WE WON'T BE LONG!
OH...GO RIGHT AHEAD, MA'AM!
THE ROOFTOP? WHAT CAN WE SEE HERE?
THE ROOFTOP RESTAURANT ACROSS THE STREET...
"...WHICH IS RUN BY VERNON GOTTSCHALK."
"VERMIN' GOTTSCHALK? THE MOBSTER? YOU THINK HE WANTS A PIECE OF THE FILM BUSINESS..."
...OR JUST CRAWFORD? EITHER WAY, THAT WAS ENLIGHTENING...
GABE, LOOK...
"JIMMY ADLER – AND MARTA LEWIS. THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE UP TO NO GOOD."
"YEAH, BUT SO DO WE. LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE FOLLOWING CRAWFORD."

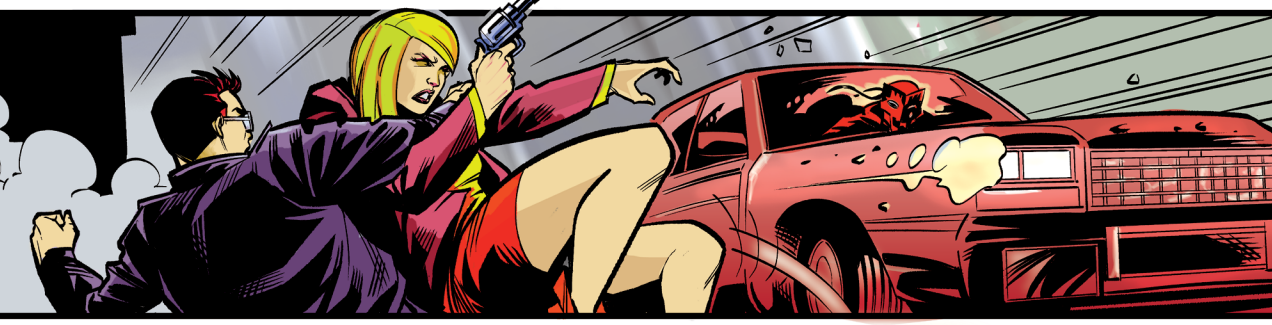
"NOT TOO CLOSELY, THEY'RE NOT – NOT WITH MUSCLE LIKE THAT AROUND."
"LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE LOST THE SCENT – FOR TONIGHT, ANYWAY...!"
MAYBE WE SHOULD CONFRONT THEM – ?
I THINK NOT. THIS KNOWLEDGE IS MORE VALUABLE IF THEY DON'T KNOW WE KNOW IT. MAYBE WE CAN USE IT... TOMORROW NIGHT.
THIS IS POLICE TYRANNY, LT. BLISS! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT – !
THE CITY GIVES ME THE RIGHT, MR. BRADLEY! I'M SHUTTING YOU DOWN, NOW!
MY STUDIO WILL CALL THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE – !
LOOK – !
HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING YOUR OWN SET? A MAN IS DEAD! I'M NOT LETTING ANYONE ONE ELSE TAKE THE FALL FOR –

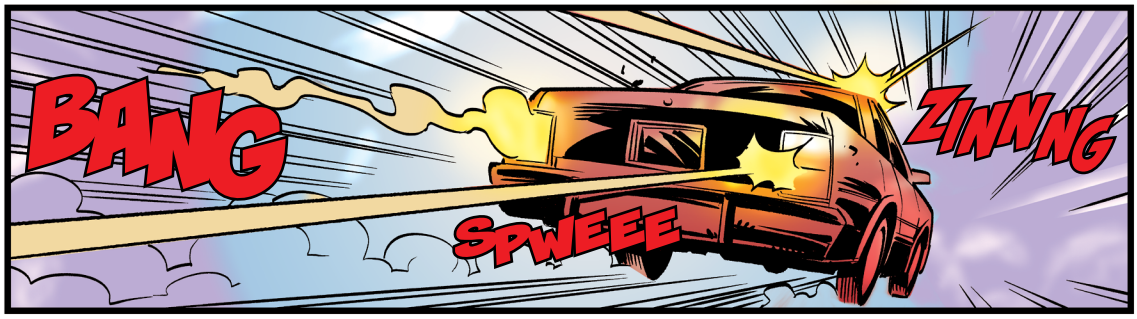
SIMONS, SEAL OFF THE BUILDING – NOW!
ON IT, LOOT!
IT'S SHANNON CRAWFORD – HER THROAT IS SLASHED!
AND LOOK AT HER FACE – !
YOU LOOK AT IT – OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT!
– I'M MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT'S IN HER HAND!
EVERYBODY, STAY WHERE YOU ARE! IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE DRILL, YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN IT!

THAT TOOK HOURS, AND WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED, LIEUTENANT? NO ONE HAS AN ALIBI... OR A KNIFE...
AND ALL WE FOUND WAS ANOTHER BLOOD-STAINED ROBE!
SIMONS! GET THOSE TWO STAND-INS IN HERE!
OR IS THAT "STANDS-IN"? LIKE "ATTORNEYS GENERAL"...?
GABE, NOT NOW...
ADLER - LEWIS! I CAN'T PROVE IT YET, BUT I KNOW YOU'RE UP TO SOMETHING! BUT IT ENDS NOW, IS THAT CLEAR?
WE'VE DONE NOTHING!
I LOVED MISS CRAWFORD! SHE GAVE ME MY FIRST BREAK...
GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE! IF YOU ACTED THAT WELL IN THE MOVIES, YOU'D HAVE OSCARS!
YOU'RE HAVING THEM ALL SHADOWED, OF COURSE?
OF COURSE. BUT RIGHT NOW, ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT FOR THEM TO SLIP UP...


"THEM," LIEUTENANT? ARE YOU SO SURE THEY'RE A TEAM?
EVERY INSTINCT I HAVE TELLS ME THEY ARE, WEBB!
DO YOU MIND IF WE JUST WALK FOR A WHILE, JEN? I NEED TO CLEAR MY HEAD...
...AND NOT JUST OF THE LIEUTENANT'S SMOKE.
NO, THAT'S FINE...
...DO YOU WANT TO GET SOME DINNER, ACE?
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, NO. ALL I CAN THINK OF IS SONDRA CRAWFORD'S FACE...WHY WAS IT SLASHED WHEN DERRON TRASK'S WASN'T...
GABE - !
SCREEEEEECH
LOOK OUT-!


BANG
SPWEEE
ZINNNG

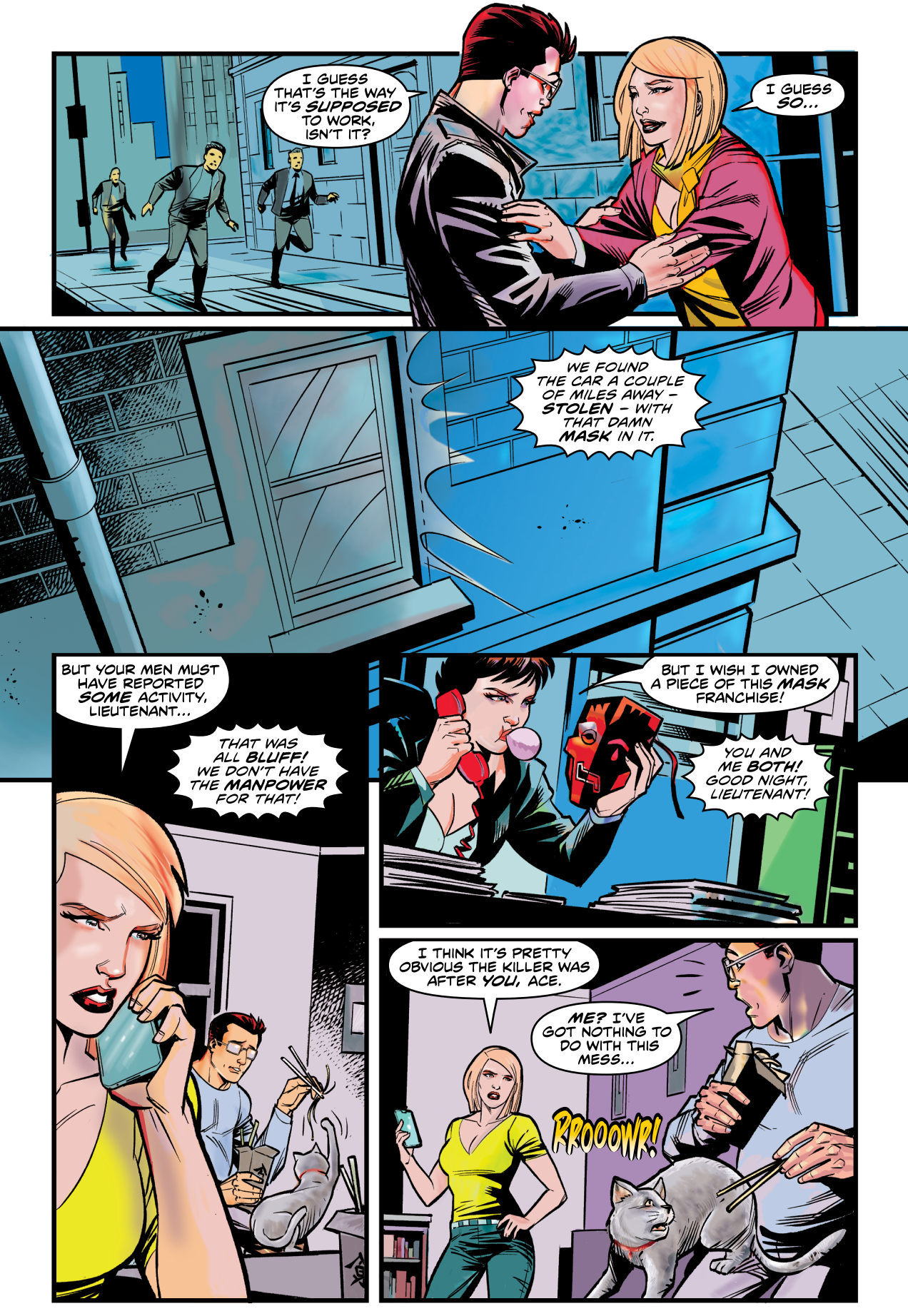


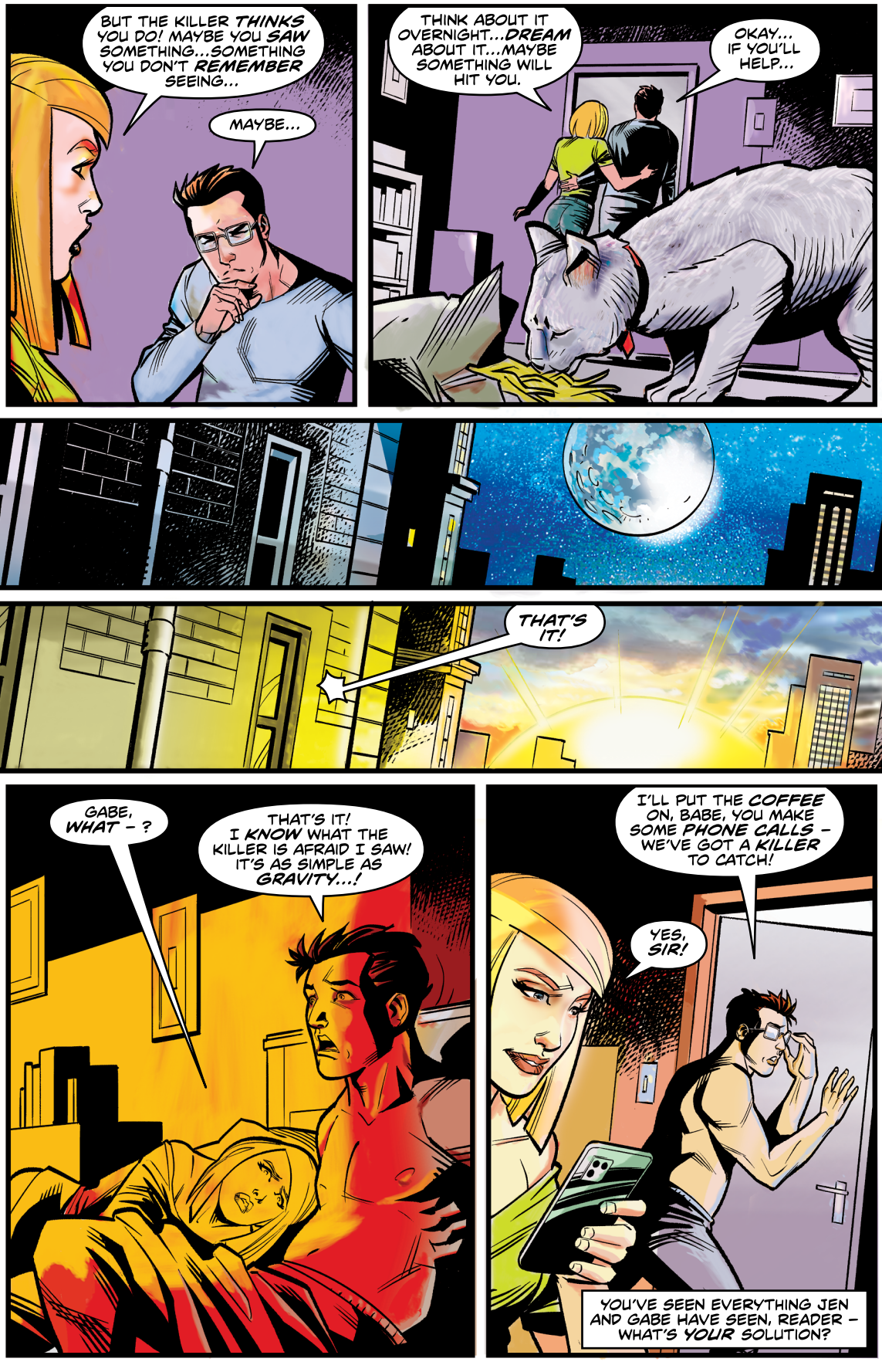

BANG
SPWEEE
ZINNNG

HELLO, 911? THIS IS AN EMERGENCY – !

ARE YOU OKAY – ?
ARE YOU OKAY?

YOU SAVED ME...
YOU SAVED ME...!


I GUESS THAT'S THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK, ISN'T IT?
I GUESS SO...
WE FOUND THE CAR A COUPLE OF MILES AWAY – STOLEN – WITH THAT DAMN MASK IN IT.
BUT YOUR MEN MUST HAVE REPORTED SOME ACTIVITY, LIEUTENANT...
THAT WAS ALL BLUFF! WE DON'T HAVE THE MANPOWER FOR THAT!
BUT I WISH I OWNED A PIECE OF THIS MASK FRANCHISE!
YOU AND ME BOTH! GOOD NIGHT, LIEUTENANT!
I THINK IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS THE KILLER WAS AFTER YOU, ACE.
ME? I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS MESS...
RROOOWR!


BUT THE KILLER THINKS YOU DO! MAYBE YOU SAW SOMETHING...SOMETHING YOU DON'T REMEMBER SEEING...
MAYBE...
THINK ABOUT IT OVERNIGHT...DREAM ABOUT IT...MAYBE SOMETHING WILL HIT YOU.
OKAY... IF YOU'LL HELP...
THAT'S IT!
GABE, WHAT – ?
THAT'S IT! I KNOW WHAT THE KILLER IS AFRAID I SAW! IT'S AS SIMPLE AS GRAVITY...!
I'LL PUT THE COFFEE ON, BABE, YOU MAKE SOME PHONE CALLS – WE'VE GOT A KILLER TO CATCH!
YES, SIR!
YOU'VE SEEN EVERYTHING JEN AND GABE HAVE SEEN, READER – WHAT'S YOUR SOLUTION?

THIS LOOKS KINDA LIKE "THE LAST SUPPER," DOESN'T IT?
STOP CRACKING WISE, WEBB! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT?
WHAT YOU HAVE NOT "GOT," MY DEAR LIEUTENANT...
...IS ME – IN ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES. I AM ENTERTAINING THIS CHARADE ONLY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BELOVED SONDRA...SO TALK QUICKLY.
YOU HEARD THE MAN, WEBB!
THE WEIRDEST ASPECT OF THIS CASE IS HOW THE MURDER WEAPON KEPT VANISHING...
"...UNTIL I REMEMBERED GOING THROUGH THE METAL DETECTORS TWO DAYS AGO...
"...I WAS ACCIDENTALLY HANDED SONDRA CRAWFORD'S STUFF, WHICH – I FINALLY REALIZED – CONTAINED A MINIATURE TAPE MEASURE..."

...LIKE THIS ONE! IT'S SMALL, EASILY HIDDEN – YOU CAN ALMOST MISTAKE IT FOR A COMPACT OR A PILLBOX.
– AND IF YOU SHARPEN ONE EDGE OF THE METAL TAPE, IT'S A DEADLY BLADE. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS USE IT, WIPE IT OFF, AND RETRACT IT!
BUT...YOU SAID CRAWFORD HAD THE TAPE MEASURE! SHE'S DEAD.
THE INVISIBLE BLADE WAS ONE GAME SHE WAS PLAYING. THERE WAS ANOTHER...A GAME I PLAY WITH MY NIECE...
HEY, MISS LEWIS – I'VE GOT YOUR NOSE!
GABE – !
BY DOSE... BY DOSE...
OH, STOP IT! DON'T ANY OF YOU REALIZE IT...?
THIS IS SONDRA CRAWFORD!

THEN...IT'S LEWIS WHO'S DEAD?
THAT'S RIGHT. I ORIGINALLY THOUGHT LEWIS WAS TRYING TO KILL CRAWFORD AND TAKE HER PLACE...
"...UNTIL I WONDERED WHY THE FACE WE THOUGHT WAS SONDRA CRAWFORD'S WAS SLASHED TO RIBBONS WHEN TRASK'S FACE WASN'T! TO HIDE THE FACT THAT IT WASN'T HER!"
CRAWFORD HAD MURDERED HER STAND-IN, TO TRY TO TAKE OVER HER LIFE!
BUT... WHY WOULD A MAJOR STAR BE SATISFIED WITH THE LIFE OF A STAND-IN...?
"NO, ASK WHY WAS SHE LETTING HERSELF BE ROMANCED BY GOTTSCHALK, WHEN SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY MISERABLE...?
"BECAUSE SHE'S BROKE!"
YOU - YOU HATED BEING WITH ME?
YOU, YES - BUT NOT YOUR MONEY! I'M IN DEBT UP TO MY NECK!
I THOUGHT BEING MARRIED TO A RICH GANGSTER WAS THE ANSWER...BUT THAT WAS JUST ANOTHER CAGE. IT WAS EASIER TO START OVER.
I CLIMBED TO THE TOP ONCE - AFTER A NOSE JOB, I COULD DO IT AGAIN! EVEN UNDER ANOTHER NAME!

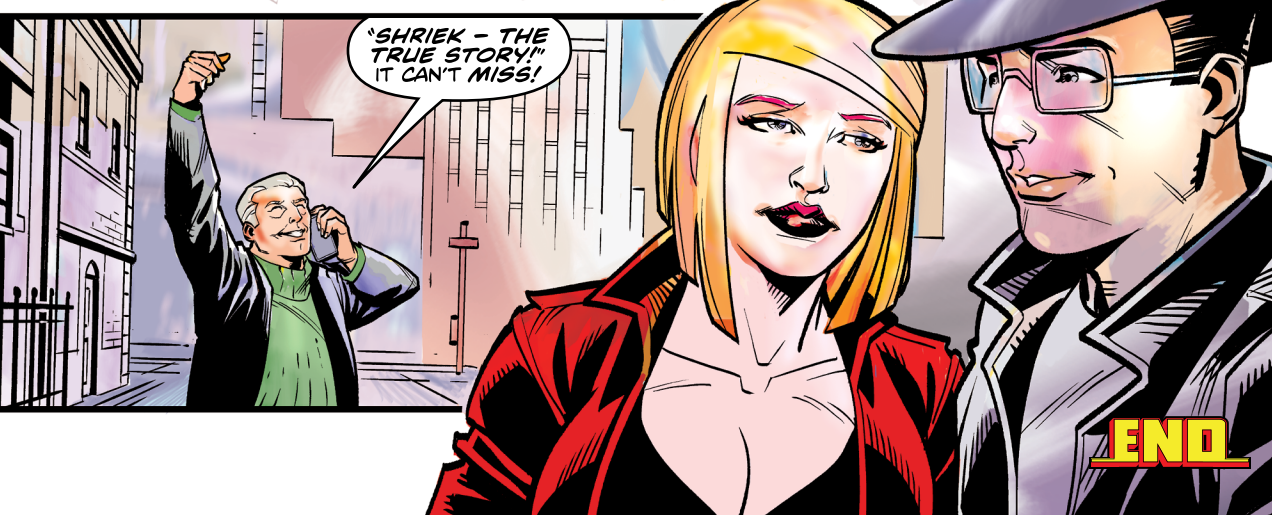
WHY, YOU BLEEDING – !
GO AHEAD, GOTTSCHALK! GIVE US A CHANCE TO TAKE YOU DOWNTOWN!

IT WAS THE ROLE OF A LIFETIME! SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE! AND IT ALMOST...ALMOST...
YEAH, WELL, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED TO KILL ME! THAT'S WHAT MADE ME REMEMBER YOUR TAPE MEASURE/SLASHER GIMMICK!
DON'T TAUNT THE SERIAL KILLER, HONEY.

THANKS, MISS MAYS...MR. WEBB... FOR...FOR...
OF COURSE. WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW, JIMMY?

I'M GETTING OUT OF THIS DAMN BUSINESS... INTO SOMETHING MORE HONEST – LIKE DRUG DEALING!

HOW ABOUT YOU, MR. BRADLEY?
CAN'T TALK, MISS MAYS – TRYING TO RAISE BACKERS!
FOR WHAT?


"SHRIEK – THE TRUE STORY!" IT CAN'T MISS!
END

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